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THE SCHOLAR

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No. 5. 421

FEBRUARY 1939

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27 JUN 1939
MADRAS

MANAGER'S APOLOGY

We owe an apology to our readers and patronisers. The belated issue of the February number must have caused some anxiety to many of them, as it certainly has meant pain to us. In addition to the ever-present disquieting finances of the Scholar which makes timely issuing almost impossible every time, there has been a further cause this month. The installation of a new and bigger machine in our Press meant much dislocation of work and hence this very late appearance of this number. While this is a matter for regret, the additional equipment in the Press will, we hope, enable us to bring out the journal in time hereafter and do more justice to the patronage we receive.

—:o:—

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(Vide Fort St. George Gazette, dated 10th May 1938.)

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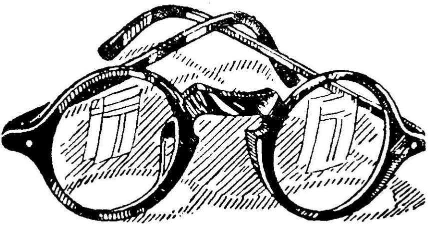

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"THE GODS ARE COMING"
By Svetaslav Roerich.

THE REGISTRAR OF BOOKS
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MADRAS

THE SCHOLAR

FEBRUARY 1939

Vol. XIV. *No. 5.*

The Imperative

By NICHOLAS ROERICH

WHAT sort of work should claim our immediate attention? Everyday routine is, in itself, a very necessary form of work, and any conscientious labor has value, but there are so many complications in the world of to-day that we ought to, first of all, select the work which is of the utmost importance.

But how are we to know when a task is of the utmost importance and how prevent its being overlooked amidst the hurry of our daily routine?

In these days of upheaval such a matter is of the highest importance.

There is nothing unnecessary in everyday routine work, or it would have been long ago excluded; none the less we ought to give attention, at the same time, to the guiding principle of our times.

There is a saying, often used in the navy, 'do your best', by which every man is called upon to do his best in the way of knowledge, resourcefulness and courage.

This will have the tendency to rouse every man to a feeling of obligation and responsibility.

A command such as 'every man is expected to do his duty' is no longer personal but refers to urgent circumstances with which every man has to deal to the best of his ability.

The worker has to decide if he will act at once or wait until later. Should he decide to wait, this will also be a form of action, since he is only holding up until certain invisible circumstances have co-ordinated.

Should he decide to act, however, then he ought to go carefully and adopt the best methods. Once he has begun the fight, he should beware of useless blows, for an inexperienced fighter can damage the most precious blade.

It is not always easy to decide what task is the most urgent. Experience, however, which gives us the faculty of intuition will gradually accustom us to taking rapid decisions.

Intuition is always immediate and direct, whereas calculation is often deceptive.

He who is guided by intuition can generally discriminate even in the most complicated situation. Amidst much that seems urgent and new there is a great deal which is obsolete and superfluous.

Whoever, despite the dangers and obstacles of the way, can discern the vital issues knows what is required.

He is not surprised to know that such imperative undertakings are surrounded by the utmost dangers and obstacles, because the powers of darkness are always present where life makes its appearance.

To select what is most urgent does not mean to choose what is easiest. Only worthless Maia surround the mirages of easy attainment. In fairy tales we often hear of three paths, and the one which entails the least loss is the shortest. Where the risk is great, there the discovery is great, and, in fact, there lies the guarantee.

Perhaps you will think this is a matter for fairy tales, but even fairy tales warn us that there is a world of difference between words and deeds.

In historical narratives we generally meet with little more than symbolical hieroglyphs of achievement—panther leaps, as it were.

But the panther has to collect his whole strength before leaping and ~~this itself~~ is a form of activity.

Jackals accompany their movements with howling and screaming which is according to their character. From animals we

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can get a glimpse of what bloodthirstiness really is, and come to see that coarseness and cruelty are things which are out of place in the new world of the future.

All worthy activity is far removed from cruelty and bloodthirstiness and is rooted in steadfastness, and in the effort to strike on new ways of life.

Even wells will dry up and time is needed for fresh moisture to gather. If the well has been bored in the right place then the water will naturally replenish itself, provided you give it time.

But, as the saying is, "Do not spit in the well, this water is for drinking".

Many foolish travellers have allowed their wells to be contaminated, never expecting to return to them again. Often enough, however, circumstances have obliged them to do so.

The moment is, of course, one of great tension. What is most needed is probably near to hand but requires the concentration of all our attention if we are to discover it.

Nature is always calm before a storm, and an experienced traveller will never mistake this calm for a sign of fine weather.

I know that it is not easy to avoid being agitated when urgent events are knocking at the door, and amidst the noise and turmoil of the present hour there is the danger that we may overlook this inner rapping.

Inwardly, and to an even greater extent outwardly, all the different strata of life are seething, and what is most urgent and needful is being dispersed in effervescence, in sparks and in splashes of light.

How are we to gauge what is best, what is most needful, and where is the measure of the great and small?

Everyone has read stories concerning people who failed to recognise what was good for them; it was only when it was too late that they began to recover their sight and tear their hair.

It is a common sight to see travellers arriving too late for the boat. The gangway has been lifted and the unfortunate traveller is left behind gesticulating amidst the fluttering handkerchiefs of the crowd that has come to see their friends off.

Perhaps it was urgent for the traveller to leave with this particular boat and he had been detained by some chance circumstance. It is in such cases that we ought to remember the saying 'act according to your ability', 'act when it is necessary', 'act when it is urgent'.

This threefold action—according to capacity, necessity and urgency—denotes what is essential. In such noble intensity there is the secret of what is inevitable, urgent and imperative. The younger the heart, the quicker will it respond to what is imperative.

A youthful heart, however, is not to be measured in years, for many frozen and senile hearts are found among the new born. Many hearts are so darkened by coarseness and cruelty that their hardheartedness will show itself in their daily conduct of affairs.

Even good people are sometimes hardhearted but this prevents them from realising what is essential. One-sided measures will prevent one from approaching the necessary and even after collecting all accumulations we shall still sense a certain deficiency.

To recognize the imperative supposes a certain comprehensiveness and requires that sense of synthesis which is the true sign of culture.

The task of culture will always be to outline the principal traits of what is most needful. This is just. But among the problems of culture some will require years of preparation, others immediate action. And we must know which of these requires immediate fulfilment.

Think, think, think; necessity demands intensity of thought. Only in such intense energy will the radiant fire disclose what is imperative.

Yet the outline of this severe and beautiful face does not terrify; on the contrary, it attracts the heart and arms it with new strength.

" And as the vague lines of a secret letter suddently stand out above the flame so will a vision appear before you all at once."

Siddavattam

(A Paradise of Water-Melons)

By RANGA RAO NIPPANI

IT was a hot stuffy day. The Bombay Express pulled up with a sharp jerk at Cuddapah Railway station. A hot wind blew mercilessly and one felt very thirsty. Suddenly the cry of "Siddavattam Karbujas" rent the air. Vendors ran hither and thither with big yellow fruits in their hands and baskets. We purchased one and ate it. Thirst disappeared miraculously and we felt happy. I decided to visit Siddavattam, the home of water-melons.

Eight miles from a station of that name on the main line between Madras and Bombay is located the town of Siddavattam, which is the headquarters of a taluk as well. It is a beauty spot in sun-baked Cuddapah district. Located amidst beautiful scenery with wooded hills all around with the river Pennar sweeping its ageold fort-wall, guarded by a friendly moat, Siddavattam has preserved to a great extent from destruction its architectural treasures from the hand of the iconoclast and the infidel.

A Carved Pillar, a Yali with a rider Figure of Narasimha and Venugopala.

Tradition has it that for a long time it was ruled by Pallava Kings of South India, then by Jains and Chalukyas and finally by the Nabobs of Cuddapah. The fort is four square miles in area and as we pass from one Mantapam to another and from one scene of historic import to another, thoughts of the vanished splendour of the Nabobs flash across one's imagination. Here is the beautiful audience hall with pillars carved with a rich intricacy of detail. There is the Royal mosque high up on the fort wall overlooking the river. The scene is enchanting. Miles and miles

of the sand bed are green with gardens of water-melons, which are grown and exported to different places in India.

But there is a risk of the river rising in floods. Water-melon cultivation is an inexpensive industry yielding a profitable return. What is required is patience and industry. Here is an avenue of employment to some of our educated unemployed with the spirit of the times who might profitably take to water-melon cultivation. A couple of rupees would suffice to start with, and it is an experiment that is worth trying.

A Corridor.

Siddavattam melons are no doubt sweet, but sweeter are the memories associated with its hoary past, when during the heyday of its prosperity under several dynasties, artisans and poets flocked to its court. Srinadha and Pothana, the famous poets of Andhradesa and great Acharyas like Ramanuja, Madwa, Sankara and Chaitanya, graced the royal court which is in ruins to-day.

The sculptural art of Siddavattam, though lacking in the elaborate and intricate details of the temples of Halebid and Dwarasamudra afford an interesting study to a student of Indian art, in that the motifs have a direct appeal to the imagination of the observer in the simplicity of their outline and direct approach to the transcendental spirit behind the objective form.

It was late in the evening when I retraced my steps to the station and as the darkness of the night enveloped the eastern horizon, a soft red glow filled the western sky shedding a golden yellow light on the mosque. The scene and the setting were perfect. I was instinctively reminded of Omar's "Lo! the hunter of the East has caught the Sultan's turret in a noose of light."

Figure of Kodandarama with two villagers standing near the ruins.

As I turned back to have a look at the city, it had grown dark and only the cry "ALLAHO AKBAR" could be faintly heard. It was the poor Khaji who lived in the mosque who was praying for the welfare of humanity and for peace on earth, as his father and great-grand father had prayed in the same spot for centuries.

The Muses

BY BARNETT D. CONLAN

White peonies, that catch the fire of dawn,
Have made this place, like ancient Helicon,
A haunt of the Muses ; and the morning star
Flashes rare messages, of which they are
The receivers. Half in light and half in sound,
Tall images arise from out the profound
Abyss of the past, and, triptych-wise,
Speak of the future, of a world that dies ;
Eclipsed by some new revelation, sent
Into oblivion, while the instrument
Of clearer, fairer, purer lines of thought
Links all the world, and all again are taught
That light is beauty. In this mighty span
Of influences we see the Tien-Shan,
The Himalaya, rising, as of yore
Rose Orpheus with Olympus, while the door
Of Heaven is opened, and the Muses bring
New beauty from the renovated spring
Of the Spirit. Let the music of the West
Join to the deeper vision of the East,
Until the Hymn of Space, in soaring o'er us,
Sound the clear note of Dawn—the world's Great Chorus.

CLIO

The spinning wheel
Of the world,
The Parcae thread,
Flies on,
Till all the past
Be changed or hid,
Within some future,
Which we cannot see,
Beneath the mask
Of ancient history.

Now Clio,
Seize this
Pearl-inwoven shell,
And hearken to
The end of things
The wall that separates
Two worlds,
Rears in our sight,
Night of the Occident:
The coming night!

The Book of Fate,
Sealed by the flaming Sun,
Shall have no date,
No comprehension
Of things seen as they are,
Strange to tell,
It shows the road,
That leads us
Beyond Fate.

Its verses,
Full of repetition seem,
As if drawn out
Of some recondite dream,
And yet the wheel of life
Within them turns,
While the old world
And all its history
Burns.

Muse of appearances
Hard to relate,
The death of all
Appearances,
The gate of Asia
Opens on some higher way,
Where life will come
To conquer Destiny.

Roll up the scroll
Of the past,
Of former deeds ;
Clio, let loose,
In the wind,
Where the flame feeds,
The pages of all history,
The past,
Into the fires of the future
Cast !

POLYHYMNIA

The lyric Muse,
From the long past,
Has led us with the lute
Victorious o'er time,
And like a bird,
The spirit on quick wings
Of rhyme,
Conquers its solitude.
The magic word,
Leading us free,
Towards a sense of our Infinity.

Again shall Polyhymnia,
Bright with an orient splendour,
Rise from Asia,
And the many-coloured
Hymn of Dawn,
From Ganges unto Delphi
Sound with light,
Across the lyric
Impulse of the world,
At night of the Occident.

Sounds that extend
The whole earth over,
New hymns,
Whereby the world
Rises to higher realms,
The future
Vibrating where great wings
Are overcast,
Turning to finer issues
Than the past.

EUTERPE

Muse of the double flute,
The Pythian fete,
Muse of all music,
First when Pindar sat
Upon the throne of poetry,
And a gale of song
Came from the Stadium:
What great spell
Shall bring us back
The flower and festival
Of hymns?

The earth
Sounds a new music,
From afar,
Even from the summit
Of the Himalaya,
Chords of light
Break from a Sea of Fire,
And Echo answers
In an ecstatic choir.
Chorus of some new time,
Flower of the Flame,
Dawn of the world's
Great Hymn.

Now let the double flute
Of East and West,
Expand Euterpe,
So that what is best
Be gathered into
One o'ershadowing song:
Until the mountains
And the desert plains,
Vibrate in unison
And on all hands,
Harmony reigns.

THALIA

Not Virgil
If he lived again,
Could hear his Thalia,
Muse of the country dance,
Play through her flute
The self same melody,
All changes,
Even the Muses,
Not by chance,
But by some luminous Power,
Some sure decree,
Leading us on
To greater liberty.

The shepherds
And the river nymphs are gone
Daphnis and Chloe,
The Pierides,
Sicilian Muses
Now are heard no more,
The dance is from the Seasons
From the Sun,
Bhairava of the dawn
Hymn to the moon,
Some Indian Thalia
Will be with us soon.

The earth
Is from the earth
Wrapped in a trance,
Like mists at dawn,
Her thoughts are seen to rise,
Deep amethyst and emerald fires
Enhance
Her slow transfiguration
To the skies.
And the soft flute,
Of China,
Leads the dance !

TERPSICHORE

Dance and chorus
Of the antique world,
The Pyrrhic,
And the Spartan,
Parthenon
Of perfect movements,
These are gone,
And Terpsichore
Waits for another
Dawn of the dance,
On ways that lead
The old toward
Transcendence.

This masked dancer
Turns nor left nor right
But contains
All within:
The coming night;
The spirit of one
Departed;
Autumn mists,
By some rare miracle,
These have their gests;
The drum beats
To strange measure,
Things appear
Otherwise,
And another atmosphere
Springs from the mind.

Then comes
The dancing chorus
And a flood
Of inspiration
Fallen from above,
Like light
Draws through its evocation
The spirit of things,
And what is hid from sight,
Takes shape and moves
By incantation.

CALLIOPE

The long line
Of the Mediterranean
Travels by,
If Europe die unto the past,
The prow of this Homeric barque,
Sets forth, in the dark,
Toward new destinies,
The Illiad and the Odyssey
Rising again
Toward futurity.

The foam of all old seas
Has reached its ultimate home
Within the Ring of Time,
And the hexameter
Of some great to and fro,
Breaks in sublime cadence,
As we go toward the spaces
Of a Sea of Light.
The bell that rang before
Still calls us on,
Across the deserts
Where the flame consumes.

The Odyssey of this great quest
Shall be our theme,
Determined by the stars,
For Destiny,
Will shape from some vast dream,
This going on
Toward the Fountain of all Light
Fire of our navigation!

MELPOMENE

Anger and hunger
Are again made rife,
And the dark gulfs
Of passion, yawning under,
Mark where the tragedy.
The incessant strife
Of good and ill,
Flashes across
The world's thunder.
And all Prometheus
Comes once more
To life.

The rising tide
Of centuries will pass
This tragic bourne,
The sudden enterprise
Of some new vision
Will arouse the mind
To invent new forms of life;
Even then, there dies
This tragic world,
Tis then the Scales arise,
Holding the Scroll
Unfurled.

The Scroll of Harmony
Wherein is writ
" All passion first
Must melt into dispassion,
Before the chords of life
Can give and take
This spheral harmony
In diapason,
With the great Sun,
From whence
Comes nothing ill ".

ERATO

Look at the powerful vigour
Of this flame,
Which only Dante knew,
The Paradise
Shone with its ardour,
Like a rising star,
Time, as his cycle rolls,
Brings back the echo,
And the fire rises
Overhead again.

Break the soft instrument
Of Anacreon,
That Eros spread
Strong wings
Towards the ether ;
Psyche accompanying,
Heark ! how a gong
Murmurs through
Some new music,
Now, Erato,
Know that red suns
Shall thunder
Loud and long.

The darts
That Eros sent,
Throughout the past,
Wounded like any dart
Of senseless steel;
Now shafts of light
Rise from a Sea of Light,
And all the past
Shows like a thing unreal.
All passion is consumed
By one pure flame
Burning where Time itself
Is without name.

URANIA

Watch where an eagle
Snow-white like the light,
With moonlit plumage
Bears Urania
Towards the Milky Way,
The smallest star
Is visible to her,
In her airy flight,
This eagle,
Born of Himalayan snows,
Knows buddhist-like
The limits of the night.

The Immense
Is open to her,
In the Immense,
The Dragon at the centre
Near the pole,
Shows how the endless
Music of the spheres,
Is but the endless
Music of the soul,
And all these
Multitudinous worlds,
That spin,
Across the without,
Are likewise in within.

A new astronomy,
Urania
Where Visible,
Invisible are one,
And all things breathing
Some new atmosphere,
Will change the mind of man
An inner Sun,
Shows how the limits
Of the Milky Way,
Melt before
Our own infinity.

THE ORIENT MUSE

The circle now is spent
The Sacred Nine,
Even as the spinning earth,
Must turn again,
Back to their source
The orient fount of Dawn.
Again the season
Of great Song begins,
The Leader of the Chorus,
She who spins
The thread of all our destiny
Is born.

The Orient Muse
Shall lead the Sacred Nine,
Back from the East,
Unto their sacred shrine
Again the Winds
Bear melodies
The foam,
Of luminous seas
Breaks over us,
A sound
Of deeper music
Gushes from the profound
Source of Castalia
Once their sacred home.

Yet over all
Is daknesss
Coming night;
Shadows the Occident
There is no light,
No sense of unity,
No inner goal,
Until her raiment
Wrought of stars and seas
Bring from the East
Those infinite melodies
That echo through the temples
Of the Soul.

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Saint Gnanadeva

By Prof. V. RANGACHARYA, M. A.

THERE is no name greater, in the early history of Mahratti literature, than that of Saint Gnanadeva or Gnanesvara as he is also called. The *Gnanesvari*, which is a commentary in verse on the *Bhagavatgita*, is hardly less known to the Mahratta world than the *Ramacharitramanasa* of Tulasidas to the Hindi-speaking millions. The term 'poetic commentator' suggests to us the dry-as-dust versifier whose language savours more of the ashes of the dead than the flesh and blood of the living; but in Gnanadeva there lived not merely a man of the earth, but a dreamer of truth and beauty; a real idealist who could paint a rich colour on the common canvas of a commentary. At once a teacher and seer, a scholar and sage, Gnanadeva is remembered not only as a pioneer of Mahratti literature, but as an early father of the Mahratta devotionalism. It is a well-known fact that the Krishna cult flourished in great brilliance from the middle of the thirteenth century onward in and around the Vithoba temple at Pandaripura, and spread from there throughout the Dakkan. Among the eminent popularisers of this cult, who had to be, for the sake of winning over all sections of mankind, at once spiritualists and literateurs, at once experts in the Aryan erudition and the popular tongue, Gnanadeva occupies a pre-eminent place.

Gnanadeva was the son of a Vithoba or Vithalvant who was, in turn, the son of a pious couple named Govinda Pandita and Nira Bai, who lived at a village called 'Appu-pura' on the banks of the Ganges. The family was a pillar of the Vasihnava faith, and belonged to that brotherhood, very commonly found in Indian mediaeval history, of scholars and sages who combined the conservative wisdom of ages with the progressive sympathy of the *Bhaktimarga*. Seized early in life with the spirit of a recluse, Vithoba devoted himself to pilgrimage to all the sacred temples of India, and eventually settled at Alandi or Alakapura in the Mahratta country, just then beginning to have a sense of national consciousness which for the first time separated it, under the aegis of the enlightened rule of the Yadavas of Devagiri, politically from the rest of the Dakkan. Young Vithoba won the admiration of a pious local householder, Siddha Pandita, and as the story goes, was induced by a mandate from Lord Vithoba, through the usual channel of a vision, to accept the hand of Rukma Bai, the daughter of Siddha Pandita who was

similarly divinely ordained for the sake of the world's good. With his bride Vithoba returned to his native village in the north. Losing his parents some time later, he came, at the instance of his father-in-law, to Alakapura and spent his days there in holy studies and in the pious devotion to Lord Vithoba of Pandaripura. Nothing satisfied him so well as the dedication of his entire heart to the service of his divine namesake, whose Brahmotsava on *Karttika-ashadha* was the most glorious occasion in the calendar of his mind. Days merged into months, and months into years in this manner; but Vithoba found no real contentment in the life he pursued. From his very childhood he had yearned for the life of a Sanyasin, and he now wished to give up the Grihasta's life for it. Rukma Bai was not for such a sacrifice. She had not even a single child to console her, and she was not willing that her husband's resignation should be strung up to an endeavour so damaging to her. She appealed to her father for intercession, and he assured her that, so long as Vithoba had no child, he would not have fulfilled the Sastraic injunction regarding *Grihastasrama* and so was ineligible for Sanyasin-hood. In this, however, he calculated without a full knowledge of his son-in-law. Taking leave of his wife on a pretended pilgrimage to Benares, Vithoba proceeded to that sacred place, became the disciple of Ramananda, and begged of him to invest him with the Sanyasic robes. Ramananda asked him whether he had discharged his duty to his ancestors by having a son, and whether his resignation was not conducive to the heart-burning of his wife and people. In his desire to shirk away from the world's attractions, Vithoba hid the real situation at home, and Ramananda bestowed on him the symbols of the Sanyasa-asrama.

The retirement of Vithoba caused a bitter ache in his wife's heart. A woman who had not risen to the age when tenderness to conjugal tie could be easily burnt, she raised a voice of prayer which thrilled with vexation and hurt. She had constructed a temple in her heart and put her husband's image in it; and unable to forget him, she propitiated God Asvattha Narayana, the Lord of the sacred Asvattha tree, to grant her desire to have him once again in the chamber of her life.

And she did not go unanswered. Ramananda happened to go on a pilgrimage to Ramesvaram, and he came to Alakapura in course of it. Taking shelter at the foot of the sacred tree, he saw Rukma Bai engaged in worship there. On seeing him she paid due obeisance, and he blessed her to the effect that she should have a happy conjugal life, blessed with a number of children. On Rukma Bai saying that it was impossible as her husband had become a Sanyasin and thereby broken her heart and happiness,

Ramananda inquired into her history, and learnt the story of Vithoba. He then realised that he himself was to blame, as he had not taken trouble to make an adequate inquiry into Vithoba's past, but simply taken him at his word and given him the Sanyasic *asrama*. The greatness of Ramananda lay in the fact that there was developed in him as much the spirit of service to man as the service to God. He was a man who could not serve God by harming his fellow-creatures. He condemned that bare wisdom of ages which was not accompanied by a union of hearts; and in the execution of natural justice he was prepared to break the hide-bound convention of ages. His wisdom was not averse to the enterprise of novelty. Proceeding therefore to Benares with Rukma Bai and her people, he compelled his disciple Vithoba to once again take up the householder's life. Vithoba was dead against being tied again on a matrimonial noose; but he was voiceless inasmuch as he had received the Sanyasic robes with a lie on his lips. He could not continue to be a Sanyasin with the idea of disobedience to his Guru, added to his own prevarication and heartlessness weighing constantly in his mind. He could not be happy under such circumstances. No doubt the contemptible jeers of people would be hurled against a Sanyasin who had once again turned to the life of a householder; but the whisper of the voice within, together with the philosophy of the singularity of the divine dispensation of things, led to his reversion to domestic life.

Thus it was that Vithoba returned with Rukma Bai to Alakapura; and in course of time he had three sons and a daughter,—Nivrttideva, Gnanadeva, Sobhan, and Mukta Bai. Gnanadeva's birth is generally attributed to 1275 A. D., and he is said to have lived barely for 21 years and closed his divine career in 1296. But to reconcile it with the date of Ramananda is impossible unless we suppose that his birth is generally antedated by more than half-a century or that his career has been given by tradition too short a period of life.

But from the moment that Vithoba returned to Alandi his life became one of unpleasant sensationalism. He was a constant target of sarcasm among the local Brahmans. They ignored the fact that he was a real Bhagavata, and that the shackles of the world chafed him sorely while they sat lightly upon themselves, but ostracised him as a victim to the attraction of sex and as a violater of *dharma*. And so Vithoba had to live apart from others in a secluded hut. The surface of his pure good nature was not ruffled by anger or the sense of grievance, and if the joy of man's company was stolen away from him, he was happily nearer God.

But the lapse of time brought its own troubles. When the time for the *upanayana* of the boys came, the orthodox party refused *en masse* to help one who had been a social *taboo*. Unable to move their hearts, Vithoba leapt at one bound into a martyrdom of self-extinction. He found relief by consigning his body to the waves of the Triveni at Prayaga, hoping that, by such expiation, he would secure the happiness of his children.

But the sacrifice was in vain. The puritans of Alandi displayed the same cold uncompromising rigidity which orthodoxy has always displayed throughout the centuries. At the same time they wanted to set their doubts at rest by advising the youths to proceed to Paithan and get the written sanction of the orthodox society of that place for their investment with the sacred thread. The three youths proceeded accordingly to Paithan, and prayed to the local leaders of society to recognize their title to the *Samskara*. But the Brahmans of Paithan were equally attached to creeds and dogmas. They flashed an equally vehement glance of hostility at them; towards 'the reprehensible progeny of a weak-minded Sanyasin' and directed them to seek the advice of the then accredited leaders of Brahmanism at Brahmapuri not far off. The three children then took their petition to Brahmapuri. The leaders of that stronghold of exclusiveness went into their history and then made the pronouncement that, as the sons of their father, they could not be admitted into the orthodox circle; but that there was nothing against their leading the meritorious life of true Bhagavatas. There was no objection, they said, for their pursuit of a godly and pure life based on the conviction that God is everywhere and in all beings and that the best kind of life is to worship Him with unalloyed devotion and, as a necessary part, to look on all men as equal in the eye of God.

The three youths, for their part, did not demur to this decision. Endowed with the sparks of God-love from the beginning, they felt that the contemptuous pronouncement of orthodoxy was by no means uncongenial to their own instructive mode of thought and life. To their devotional mind *Bhakti* was a magic wand which opened a true world of God; and they did not regard life's gifts as less precious simply because they were denied formal entry into the Pharisaic circle! If they could not reach the hearts of the rigidly orthodox, they could reach the heart of thousands of their fellow beings and of God; and what more was needed?

The decision of Gnanadeva and his brothers not to make a fuss over formalities was soon followed by a sensational episode. The orthodox dictators of Brahmapuri laughed at the eloquent name Gnanadeva given to one of the brothers, and said that it

afforded a capital example of human vanity and mockery of truth. The story goes that there was seen at that moment a Muslim driving a buffalo bull with some leather articles on its back, and that the orthodox scoffers of Gnanadeva insultingly remarked that that beast might equally legitimately be dubbed Gnanesvara. But to the great surprise of all, the youth did not fly into a black temper at the insult. His face, on the other hand, lighted up as if at the discovery of an opportunity wherein he could leap into distinction. "O great men," he said "you are indeed right! How is it incorrect to call this buffalo Gnanesvara? Does not the Lord of the Gita say that He is everywhere, in all beings,—in yourself, myself, in this buffalo? The one Brahman pervades over all, permeates all.

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।

He is the *Kshetra* in all things and beings, the all-omnipenetrative cause of the harmony of cosmos. The same elementary Svaras give rise to the bewildering variety of tongues and sounds; the same gold goes to make a hundred ornaments. Even so it is the common divine thread running through the universe. To call the buffalo Gnanesvara therefore," concluded Ganadeva, "is by no means inconsistent with truth. To minds which are not compressed into narrow pre-conceived channels of ritualistic bigotry, such a view is both natural and correct."

"If so, it follows that a blow administered to this buffalo should fall on you."

"Aye! If what the Vedanta says is true, it is bound to be so".

The critics thereupon induced the Muslim to rain a few blows on his animal; but the moment that it was done there was reason for every face becoming transfigured by wonder! All the blows were felt by poor Gnanadeva, and his back was serrated with wounds.

But the ritual-ridden Brahmans of Brahmapuri were not in a mood to be convinced. Their senses had been indeed made alert by what had just happened; but the shadow of the demon of scepticism was still on them, and they refused to believe what their eyes saw. With a hardened heart they said that, if what they saw was true, the lad would prove it by making the buffalo chant the Veda! Gnanadeva, so goes the story, rose equal to the new ordeal. He passed his hands over the buffalo's face, and lo! it broke out into as fine a Vedic chant as ever uttered by the most erudite Brahman!

The religious fraternity was now not only disillusioned, but wonder-struck. The miracles broke their morale. They ac-

knowledged that they had ridden the high horse against youths who were far better Brahmans than they. These young people might not have all the external marks of orthodoxy. They might be quite innocent of what went *usually* for piety and godliness. But they were, all the same, monuments of purity and piety. They might be lacking in ceremonial particularism; but there was not the least tint of that sophistication, that self-deception, which was the chief mark of their own ritual-bound dogma. There was real divinity in their illiterate simplicity; and they were, obviously, the *avatars* of the Trimurtis themselves, and of the Loka-maya, to have been capable of such unheard of achievements. Hailing them as born *Mahatmas*, the Brahmans of Brahmapuri poured the adoration of their hearts upon the youths and their sister, acknowledged their status, and gave them every scope for a spiritual education in the customary manner.

Gnanadeva then lived, together with his brothers and sister, at Paithan. Harmony and happiness reigned in their lives; for they used to spend their time not only in studying but in singing the glory of God and leading a simple unsophisticated life. But all people were not hypnotised by their character. There were a few diehards, amongst whom hypocrisy still passed for religiousness. They showed their pettiness by refusing to represent the ancestors of Susila, the owner of the house where Gnanadeva was living, when he performed his ancestral rites. Gnanadeva bade him take courage, and go on with the preparations as if nothing was going to stand in the way. And when the time for offerings came, three learned people appeared miraculously and received them! The divine grace which Gnanadeva was blessed with enabled him, by his prayer, to get the personal attendance of Susila's forefathers themselves on the occasion! Once again the orthodox people of Brahmapuri were stunned by the dramatic situation and solution; and they now gladly sent Gnanadeva and his brothers and sister back to their native place, with a detailed written report of what they had seen. And the people of Alandi had indeed a tangible demonstration of the same; for the gifted family was accompanied, we are told, by that very buffalo which had proved Gnanadeva's greatness by chanting the Vedas and which, ever since, was displaying the same capacity! The world realised that the surprise which was flung at them was natural because of the divinity in the brothers, and in their sister!

Tradition says that Gnanadeva, Nivrtti, Sobhan and Mukta Bai stayed on the way at a holy place called Galavakshetra, and distinguished the period of their stay there by their literary and pious labours. It was here that Gnanadeva composed his great commentary on the Bhagavadgita, known as the *Gnanesvari* or

the *Bhavarthadipika* as well as the *Amritanubhava* in refutation of scepticism and materialism. Gnanesvara is said to have been only fifteen years at the time. As has been already observed, the traditional date for the composition of the *Gnanesvari* is A.D. 1290. But either this has to be given up for a date later by about half a century, or what is more plausible, the alleged contemporaneity of Gnanadeva's father with Ramananda must be dismissed as shady. In any case, the place of the *Gnanesvari* in the evolution of the Mahratta language and literature has been recognized for the last so many centuries. At one stroke Gnanadeva leapt into a great name. Men saw in him a poet and a teacher of the Bhakti-yoga of a rare type. Philosophically Gnanadeva was considerably influenced by Advaitism.

One curious legend in connection with this period of Gnanadeva's life is that the buffalo which accompanied the youths passed away in the course of their homeward journey at a village called Ayomukhi, and that the mound where the sacred animal was interned is there even today.

The return of Gnanadeva and his people to Alandi was followed by a period of pious activities. People forgot the social odium attached to them, and regarded Gnanadeva as a divine teacher of the Bhakti-yoga. A single soul, Visobhakesa by name, refused to subscribe to this universal adoration. Tenacity was abnormally developed in him; and he intimidated the local potter to the extent of dissuading him from selling new pots to young Mukta Bai on the occasion of the *Dipavali* festival. The potter dared not disobey the man as he was a helpless debtor to him. Little Mukta Bai was broken-hearted. She was all at once deprived of the warmth, the music, the dream, ever associated with the festival of Krishna's birth. But Gnanadeva consoled her in a manner which struck the world mute with wonder. He offered his own back, which he made as hard and red-hot as an iron pan by his yogic power, so that his young sister could prepare her cakes on it! The scene which was witnessed in secret by Visobhakesa melted his heart, and he who had been a heartless wretch turned into an ardent slave of Gnanadeva, whose divine greatness he acknowledged by a systematic partaking of the remnants of his holy food.

Gnanesvara is said to have closed his miraculous career while he was only twenty-one years of age. A *Brindavan* over his sacred remains was raised on the banks of the Indrayani by his numerous and admiring flock; and the story is common that his image is alive, and he is occasionally seen in flesh and blood by his Bhaktas. A singular feature of the icon of the saint is said to be that it is seated on a seat of *bel* and *Tulasi* leaves, the two things

symbolising the *Saulabahya* of the Lords Siva and Vishnu whose identity with Brahman he realised as an Advaitin. There is a common tale current to the effect that, on occasions, he displayed his gracious condescension to the more favoured of his Bhaktas, by his visibility and by his gift of his sandal or some other similar tangible symbol, Gnanadeva's gospel is one of the harmony of devotion, Gnana and Yoga in practical worship; but he upheld the doctrine that it is *Bhakti*, more than *Gnana* or *Yoga*, that illumines the human soul and brings it nearer God, though, curiously enough, he lives in the imagination of the Mahratta people, more through his intellectual achievements than his practical teachings. Gnanadeva's memory is dear to the Mahratta nation for the fact that he was a monument of godliness and bhakti and that he won a splendid triumph over blind and heartless orthodoxy which, while flaunting the externals of ceremonialism, ignored the true inner self common to all humanity. An equally tangible work of his is in the literary field and in the allegiance paid to his memory the Mahratta sentiment expresses its gratitude for a gift which cannot be too highly valued.

Thousand and One Names

By The Rev. F. H. ALDHOUSE, M. A.,

THE Druid-novice, sword in hand, waited by the wooden temple of Angus Oge which stood in a grove. He knew that the converts who followed Tall Can (' Adze head' St. Patric, so called by the heathen Irish because of his broad shaved forehead and thin pointed beard) would surely come. They would burn the temple, but not till he was dead first. Also some of them. He grasped his sword fiercely in his feverish hand. The tense passion which had keyed the youth up to do and die exhausted him. He fell into 'an uneasy sleep. In the cool of the setting sun a voice sweet and gentle as the warblings at eve of the birds called him.

"Fintan." The boy—for he was little more—sprang up sword in hand. Before him stood a figure wrapped in a flowing white robe with a hood pulled down, casting a shadow over the face.

The novice gasped and almost fell. He saw marks on hands and feet which he recognised, the dress was that worn by the Christian Culdees, but a light proceeded from and encompassed the gracious form.

Fintan bowed low. "I see, sir," he said. "You have come to see how your worshippers have treated the temples of our Gods against whom You are at war. By some strange oversight they have failed to destroy this one, but doubtless You will make an end of it Yourself. Might I ask You as a favour to deprive me of life first ? I was prepared to fight in its defence against hostile men, but I am aware that against You all weapons are in vain.

"You know Me?" the Divine One asked.

"Yes, Sir," Fintan replied. "You are Christus Rex, God of the Romans. I ask but one gift of You, let my death be swift."

"Why, my child, should I desire to harm you? I respect loyalty and fidelity, even if it is given to wood and stone images. I am called Christus by the Romans as you say, but I have an older name than that; my most ancient name is Love."

Something in the words reached the full heart of the young Druid; he began to sob.

"Ah Lord! your words are sweet but your worshippers' deeds are bitter if your true name is Love. That is also the name of my God Angus, the Ever Young, whose temples have been given to the flames."

"Ever Young," the Divine One answered. "Yes I have been man's companion since first a human soul dwelt within his

breast. Since the world began he has loved Me passionately, and hated Me above measure. I am He that was dead by his hand, but behold I am alive for evermore. I have a thousand and one names. Christus is one, and another is —— Angus."

Fintan threw himself at the holy feet trying fervently to kiss them.

"Dear Master," he sobbed "Most gentle Lord, they have destroyed Your temples!"

"But I am not homeless; the whole Uuiverse is my dwelling place and I am He that inhabiteth Eternity. But my dearest dwelling is in the hearts of my lovers. Yours, my son and others."

"But, Beloved Lord, is it by Your will that the Christians do these deeds? If not, permit me to die in defence of this ancient house of Yours."

"My son" the radiant vision answered. "Do you protect me, or do I protect you? I have spoken a New Word for a New day. The old passes away, all things are made New. I am the first, I am the last. By whatever name men have invoked Love, they have prayed unto Me. They saw love in this green land as a happy boy; they must know him also as a Man of sorrow and acquainted with grief.

SONG OF THE VISION

Men who have outcast Truth have outcast Me.
When under any guise I come to them
And they saw Love, that was their Bethlehem
The Holy place where they met Mystery.
Truth, Beauty, Love—these are a Trinity,
Each is itself, yet each the other twain.
They live eternally, though oft times slain;
Adore them, and your worship is to Me.
Where Beauty is, there is the place of prayer
That is my Temple, My abiding place,
Where you and I shall meet: yea face to face
And beauty which I give is everywhere.

* · * *

"No, my son," St. Patrick said next day to his new adherent Fintan, "The temple you have served shall not be destroyed. Place an altar dedicated to the White Christ in it, worship the 'King of Friday' (Christ) and all will be well. I recognise there was good in the ancient religion, let that good be preserved."

As he said, so it was and Fintan continued to worship Love Ever Young Who has one thousand and one names.

Gossip

By P. P. SARADI, B.A., B.L.

JEROME K. Jerome, in commending "Idle thoughts of an idle fellow" to the readers, says he cannot conscientiously recommend it for any useful purpose whatever. He adds "all I can suggest is, that when you get tired of reading the best hundred books you may take this up for half an hour". In the same manner, we find people indulging themselves in idle talk or gossip. Many do not perceive, however, that there is cause for gossip, which is more of the type of easy relief from the worries of the work-a-day life than that there is anything of importance in it. There is however in it, the danger of its leading to serious consequences and penalties. Anything said in writing may amount to libel or defamation; anything uttered orally may amount to slander, which is equally unpardonable. Both are punishable and indictable, when they are defamatory. Gossiping is an offence in one of the States of America. I have heard many preachers of the sacerdotal order say that 'No gossiping' must be classified among the commandments of God.

Gossip is a social habit. It is necessary as an embrocation to fed-up talking-spirits. It is a safety-valve for the escape of the "gift-of-the gab". Some are very versatile and their multitudes of information require free manifestation. Observant and intelligent social beings crave for gossip either singly or coupled with some game, like cards-play. It is only with dull intellects such conversationists are a bore. That is because the other party is not equally gifted either in observation or expression or both. But gossip is without doubt an enlivening and pleasing element in life. It is an instinct in man and possibly more in woman. Sympathy in understanding or rather a sympathetic understanding, which is a rare virtue, is cultivated in gossip, but that only when one keeps oneself quiet for a while, as a mere audience and does not impatiently burst out with one's bag of impressions and feelings, if one has any. It is not uncommon to find, when we take part in gossip, that we unlearn many things, correct our impressions and come out chastened in mood and thought. Occasional gossip is different in effect from its indulgence as an inveterate habit. It is the outcome necessarily of loose talk and loose minds. It is, however, an arm weilded by shrewd business men, by which they unearth many a useful information in the business world. Dreams and ravings in the

case of some, wild vapourings of drunkards, and persons generally who are off the plane of ordinary sane thinking and talking and whose consciousness is ruffled by inebriates and dope-mixtures, are availed of by scientists, to detect the truth of the working of the mentality and the personality of those who are under observation. Similarly, in gossip when restraints of tradition and diction and sound judgement are loose or even absent, the inner nature of the man is disclosed. It would always be safe in one's own interests to be forewarned about this danger of one's own betrayal.

The Haunted Wood.

The forest sleeps:
The little singing stream
Flows thro' its shady depths a silver dream
The forest sleeps.

The moon is full:
Its clear and crystal light
Silvers with lucid beams the ebon night.
The moon is full.

A dream within a dream:
The dancing shee
Fill all the haunted wood with revelry.
A dream within a dream.

The forest wakens:
The fair morning beaming
Transmutes to purest gold nights' silver dreaming.
The forest wakens.

The magic dance goes on:
The sun shines bright.
Again the moon and stars are in the height
The magic dance goes on.

F. H. Aldhouse.

Rupert Brooke

By N. V. BHASKARAN, B. A.

SOME thirty-three years ago, Rupert Brooke died of blood poisoning on board a French ship. He was only twenty-eight years of age at the time of his death having been born at Rughby on August, 3, 1887.

The Supreme Ironist seems to have been kind to Rupert in his early life. His father was a master at the Rughby School and the poet had, therefore, his early training there. In 1905, he was awarded a prize for his poem, "The Bastille." Later, he went to King's College, Cambridge.

His pleasant personality and winning manners earned him a large circle of friends; and, with the publication of his first poems in 1911, he was ensured of the warm admiration of his countrymen. In 1912, he published a study of the Elizabethan Drama. It was mainly through his efforts that the first issue of the "Georgian Poetry" ever saw the light of day. In 1913, the poet travelled America and the Pacific Islands. His impressions about these Islands are strikingly reflected in some of his later poems; while his "Letters from America" gives an account of his opinions about that country.

The World War and England's participation in it led Rupert Brooke to take part in two of the early expeditions. During the last expedition in which he took part—the one to Antwerp—he was taken ill and died at Lemnos and was buried in the island of Imbros. Most of the important poems written by the poet, within the brief span of his life, are comprised in the two thin volumes, the first of which was published during his lifetime, and the other entitled "1914 and other Poems" after his death, in 1915. His poems and longer verses have since been collected and published in one volume.

Rupert Brooke lived and wrote during a time when English national feeling was at its height, due mainly to the conflict of interests in the European countries, which eventually led to the Great War. There was no more opportune time to appeal to its national consciousness. And Rupert Brooke did it magnificently. As Sir Henry Newbolt says, perhaps it is due to this fact that he found such an eminent place in the pantheon of Georgian poets.

Rupert Brooke's poems may be broadly divided into three classes :— viz. poems of patriotism, of love and beauty, and death and immortality.

As has been said, Brooke was intensely patriotic. He loved the English countryside, but eschewed its faults. Writing from Germany, he cries out:

"God, I will pack, and take a train
And get me to England once again:
For England is the one land, I know,
Where men with Splendid Hearts may go".

Again in that prophetic sonnet, "The Soldier,", he declares,

"If I shall die, think only this of me:
That there is some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England."

There is nothing sensuous about Brooke's love just as we find in Shakespeare's Sonnets or the poems of Keats and Byron. He hopes for an ideal love—a love stripped of its pettiness. Of this ideal love, he is sometimes sanguine, but often despairs. In fact, the note in his love poems varies according to his changing mood. In his "Dust", "Not with vain Tears", and the "Wayfarers", he feels that love will survive. But in his "Kindliness', "Thoughts on the Shape of the Human Body" and "Love is a Breach in the Walls", he takes a contrary view. In his "The Great Lover", the poet concludes,

Oh dear my loves, O faithless, once again
This one last gift I give: that after men
Shall know, and later lovers, far removed,
Praise you, 'All these were lovely', say 'He loved'.

During his travels, Brooke was particularly fascinated by places like Tahiti and Waikiki in the Pacific. His lines "Tiare Tahiti" and the sonnet entitled "Waikiki" show how passionately he loved these island beauty spots; and those sweet remembrances filled him with the problem of the survival of love.

We do not find any search for beauty in his poems. He expresses in verse even the commonplace things he sees, like "Fish" and "The Dining-Room Tea".

Death; and after that, what? This question remained a Sphinx problem to Brooke, just as it is for most of us. Will the soul survive? He satirically refers to it in "Tiare Tahiti." But he hopes against hope that, after our bodies are turned to dust, another land awaits us where all lovely things meet in loveliness once again. In 'The Great Lover,', he is emphatic:

"Oh, never a doubt but somewhere, I shall wake,
And give what's left of love again and make
New friends, now strangers.

It is, however, dangerous to evolve out of these fragmentary pieces a theory of the poet. Perhaps this would have been possible had he been spared his natural course of life.

Re-Incarnation or Rebirth

By K. R. VAIDIANATHAN

IN spite of centuries of religion and science, in spite of centuries of philosophy and reason, man has known little of the profound mystery of his own existence. He knows that he lives, but does not know why! He has struggled hard, he has put forth all his energy to find out a solution for the problem of his own existence. But he has failed. He still asks, "Why? When? Wherefore?" Life seems to be a magic and a mystery. He knows not its origin nor its end. "He is sitting in a room warming himself at the hearth with the door of birth open to one darkness and the door of death open to another!" But what beyond? What is beyond this room?

Various religions of the world have attempted to answer this question, each in its own way. The Hindus believe in the existence of a soul-entity as separate from the body. They hold that the soul leaves this body when the body dies and takes another body suitable for expression. With the Hindus the body is nothing but an instrument of the soul. And when a man is said to be dead, it only means the departure of the soul from the body. The body so far utilised by the soul as an instrument of manifestation has been rendered useless for further functioning, and the impaired body is deserted, and the soul seeks a fresh body for expression.

"The ancient Hebrews did not trouble themselves with the question of a soul-existence." They were satisfied with their pious philosophy, "With death ended all." Karl Haeckal says, "Though it is true that in the Old Testament, preceding the exile, the Hebrews distinguish a life principle different from the body which is sometimes called "Nephesh", or 'Ruakh' or 'Neshama', yet all these words correspond rather to the idea of breath than to that of spirit or soul. Also in the writings of the Palestinean Jews, after the exile, there is never made a mention of an individual soul, but always only of a life-breath emanating from God which, after the body is dissolved, is re-absorbed into the Divine 'Ruakh'."

"With the ancient Egyptians the soul was only a double, having no individuality of its own, and never able to break its connection with the body. It persists only so long as the body lasts, and if by chance the corpse is destroyed, the departed soul must suffer a second death and annihilation. The soul after death

was allowed to roam freely all over the world, but always returning to where the corpse was, at night, always miserable, always hungry and thirsty, always extremely desirous of enjoying life once more, and never being able to fulfil it. If any part of its old body was injured, the soul was always injured in those parts and this idea explains the solicitude of the ancient Egyptians to preserve their dead.

" Among the Chaldees also, though they did not speculate so much as the Egyptians as to the condition of the soul after death, the soul is still a double and is bound to its sepulchre. They also could not conceive of a state without this physical body and expected a re-surrection of the corpse again to life ; and though the Goddess Ishtar, after great perils and adventures, procured the resurrection of her shepherd husband, Dumuzi, the son of Ea and Damkina, the most pious votaries pleaded in vain from temple to temple for the resurrection of their dead friends ."

Thus various religions offer various theories, though the difference between them lies only in the recognition or not of a separate soul-entity. In the West when a man is dead people say that he gave up his ghost. In the East we say that he gave up the body. This clear demarcation between the East and the West in their way of thinking forms the main characteristic difference between the individual philosophies. They think that with death ended all. We do not think so.

It has been truly said that the body is an instrument for self-expression. It is our common experience that all our actions in the physical world are mere materialisation of their corresponding desires. I entertain the idea of going to the bazaar. The thought gets weight, it blooms with a desire and it is duly transformed into activity. I order and the order is obeyed. Thus my body is only a meak instrument for carrying out my wills and desires.

Man is made up of desires and emotions. He has a plethora of desires and wishes to be fulfilled. He is ever pining for their fulfilment. But when a man dies it seems that all his desires, his energy and emotions are lost. We think that they are entirely lost just because we cannot perceive them with our senses. This is ignorance. There is a great univeral law, the law of conservation of energy which ordains that the energy in the world is same throughout. So nothing is lost; all must live on. Thus all our desires, our mental energy and emotions do not die away when this mortal frame decays, but are drawn in a harmony by a great law of affinity. Do not think that our sweet emotions and pet desires are destroyed or mercilessly trampled

under foot ! They will be drawn to a place where the soil will be quite congenial and fertile for the growth and fructification of our unfulfilled desires.

Thus our desires do not die away ; our emotions do not fade and decay, but most certainly bear fruition. Our unfulfilled desires urge for their fulfilment and they are naturally drawn to a congenial soil where they will bear fruition.

Man has not yet developed that latent faculty in him to see beyond the frontier of Death. Death seems to man just an abbysmal gulf, a veritable hell of darkness which he dreads to cross ! He shudders at the word "Death!" He thinks that after death he would be hurled down and down to a veritable hell of agony and torture ! He thinks that, after death, he would be put to indescribable and innumerable tortures! Thus the idea of death is actually a living nightmare for many. We are unable to see death as a bridge that helps us to walk on to the other side—Death only means the transfer of our unfulfilled desires and emotions from an unsuitable place to a suitable one.

Man is like the little fluttering butterfly. It flutters from flower to flower. It sips the honey from a flower and when the honey is exhausted there it is in search of another flower !

Current Comments

Some Problems of Indian Trade.

BY AN OBSERVER

Trade with Afghanistan. There is an Indian Agent at Kabul and from his Report in November 1937 we have some idea of the actualities and possibilities of Indian trade with Afghanistan. One common Indian export is piece-goods ; but the Japanese are rapidly threatening this. The principal Japanese goods finding sale in Afghanistan are: white grey shirtings, muslin checks, grey drill, painted jean and printed twills. As the result of this Japanese competition, Indian exports fell from 3'24 lakhs to 2 lakhs in the short period of April—June 1937. India, however, has held the field in Alwan shirtings, gombroons, lungis and durries. Indian woollen products are popular but not systematically marketed. India leads in the exports of "living animals, arms and ammunition, boots, shoes and leather, while Germany has been making steady headway in drugs, medicines, dyeing material, hardware, steel products and paper. Russia is a keen competitor with India in glassware."

Indian tea has got a chance for the reason that there is a prejudice against Japanese tea and heavy cost against Chinese tea. The Trade Agent therefore suggests that a proper blend of Indian teas has a great possibility in Afghanistan.

The nature of the difficulties which Indians have in Afghanistan in their trade operations is evident from what the Afghan Government did in 1938. The Afghan policy was one of monopoly and discriminatory legislation which, though applicable to all non-Afghans, practically affected Indians in the main. Indian cars were allowed only along two roads—from Peshawar to Kabul and from Chaman to Kandahar. No motor driver was allowed to stay for more than five days. Indian traders and visitors were not allowed to stay for more than fifteen days without special permits from the Foreign Minister. In no case could the stay exceed a year. Indians could not acquire immovable property. Nor could they set up business without a heavy security. There was great difficulty again in recovering advances and outstanding balances against Afghan traders, which amounted to about 27 lakhs in July 1938 and which was enhanced by the Afghan Government's control of the foreign exchange. All these disabilities gave rise to a demand in India for a treaty based on reciprocity of treatment.

Trade with Czecho-slovakia. This country is expected by the industrialists of Czecho-slovakia to supply raw materials like (1) raw hides, (2) cotton and (3) jute, in return for finished goods like (1) machinery, (2) glass wares like bangles and beads, (3) tools and (4) piece-goods. Experts believe that India has the chance of supplying the raw materials to the extent of four times the value of the goods imported into India. Some time back the managers of the Bata Factories toured in India to see what could be done to improve the Indian market and to establish branch factories in different places. The Bata shoemakers afford one of the finest examples of business organization; and the very manner of the visit impressed the Indian public. Prof. R. D. Mukerjee of the Lucknow University, who recently visited Prague on the invitation of the Czecho-slovak Oriental Institute and Sociological Society, believes that India could learn much from that country about agricultural, rural and co-operative improvements. Thanks to an agency of the Czecho-slovak Export Industry which has been established in India, the trade between the two countries has recently grown.

In 1929 the Indian exports to Czecho-slovakia amounted to 997 million crowns. There was a fall in the subsequent periods of depression. Government tried to reduce adverse balance by restricting imports and stopping exports. In 1935–6 exchange control and import license system continued; but there has been considerable progress after 1936, though the old limit has not been reached. This is obvious from these figures :—

Period.	Imported by India (in million crowns).	Exported from India (in million crowns).
1929		997
1932 (whole year)		230
1933 ,,		256
1935—6		
1936 (January-June)	34·6	136·9
1937 ,,	84·8	257·8

A suggestion was made in 1937 for the appointment of an Indian Agent in Prague in order to expand the mutual business. The necessity for measures to ensure steadiness and progressive development is emphasised by the trend of events after the cession of Sudetanland to Germany. In the third quarter of 1938 the imports from India into that region had a substantial fall, though the exports to India, which had been growing in the course of the year, did not show a decline. The loss of Sudetanland to Czecho-slovakia has meant the loss of considerable industries and a change from the predominantly industrial

economy of the country to one of comparative industrial weakness. The trade between India and Czecho-slovakia is bound to be less under the circumstances; and how far this will be compensated by business with the expanded Germany is uncertain.

Trade with Ceylon. Ceylon buys food, clothing and other Indian products to the extent of 4.5 crores every year. The chief articles in 1937 were:

Articles.	*Value in lakhs of rupees.*
Rice	100
Fish	70
Onions	100
Pulses	22·5
Chillies	17·5
Coal	22·5
Cotton goods	50 (25 million yards)

India buys, in her turn, to the extent of 1·5 crores.

There was a growing feeling in Ceylon that there should be a more favourable balance of trade as compared with India. This made the Government of India, accordingly, accord recognition in 1937 to the appointment of a Trade Commissioner for Ceylon by the Government of Ceylon, with the headquarters for the time at Bombay. His duties were to be:—"(1) to answer trade enquiries and supply all commercial information relating to Ceylon and maintain up-to-date registers of reliable Indian importers of Ceylon products; (2) to keep the Registrar-General and Director of Commercial Intelligence informed of trade movements, prices, freight etc., and furnish periodically market reports and trade surveys bearing on Ceylon Trade and Industry; (3) to act as intermediary between Ceylon traders and foreign buyers; settle trade disputes; (4) to display samples of Ceylon produce by arrangement with Ceylon to firms and businessmen for the display of such samples; (5) to organise and participate in trade exhibitions, fairs and fetes, and carry out trade propaganda; (6) to compile and publish leaflets, pamphlets and books of reference in order to disseminate a more accurate knowledge of Ceylon; (7) to act as travel agent to increase tourist traffic to Ceylon nnd perform such other duties in connection with trade matters that may be imposed on him from time to time by the Registrar-General and Director of Commercial Intelligence".

The advantage of the opening of the Ceylon House in Bombay is clear from what Mr. M. H. Kantawala, C. E. S. reported on the working of the first six months. He pointed out that spirituous drinks could have been introduced into India but for the heavy duties and the Protectionist policy of the Congress

Governments. Ceylon arrack, punch, aerated toddy, medicated wines and spirits, he said, would have a better chance if the cost of transport and the duties had been less. Ceylon tea, again, says he, is suitable only for the richer classes and cannot compete with the Nilgiri and Assam teas in the market for the poorer consumers. Rich and delicious taste might prefer the high Ceylon tea in the morning; but the common Indian folk are contented with the Nilgiri or Assam product. Mr. Kantawala is not warm in praising the Indian taste in this respect. He says: "There is more than one tea-shop in Bombay at every street corner, and the people who frequent them are so accustomed to thick decoctions called tea that probably they would never appreciate a cup prepared in the style we are used to in Ceylon. Even they, however, expect a flavour peculiar to tea, and this flavour and aroma can best be got from a percentage admixture of Ceylon tea. The Iranis who control the tea shops must perforce buy a certain quantity of our tea and naturally look for the cheapest dust". This cheap dust is preferred as tea can then be thickened so as to satisfy the common taste. The chaff of roasted gram, again, is used to lend colour to the brew; and to add to these, there is 'artificial tea' also available in the market.

Mr. Kandawala observes that Indians have to be taught the value of genuine article not only in regard to tea, but to some other Ceylon specialities. These are: vinegar and spices like cinnamon. Mr. Kandawala's complaint is that Indians do not use sufficient vinegar or, if they use it, they prefer the cheap variety produced from diluted acids. He points out that the Ceylon vinegar, produced from cocoanuts, is far superior. Similarly, with regard to cinnamon, he observes, the Indian uses the Canton Cassia which is thick and heavy unlike the thin and fine-flavoured Ceylon variety; and he sees a large chance for the latter. Again, he sees a growing opportunity for Ceylon fruits. Indians get, in order to supplement the huge indigenous products, grapes from Palestine and South America, and pine-apple from Singapore. He believes that Jaffna mangoes have a good chance in the Bombay market in some seasons.

Two of the Ceylon luxury articles welcomed in India by the richer consumers are gems and precious stones*, and chanks. The former have to pay a duty of 50% *ad valorem*, and are still in demand. The chanks imported in India are large in quantity. Right-handed chanks, which are rare, are purchased at even high prices, as they are believed to bring Lakshmi's grace. The Ceylon chanks are prized even more highly than the Dvaraka ones, the

* Ceylon blue sapphire, it is believed, should be carefully purchased as otherwise the bad influence of Saturn is feared.

market value depending on colour, number of spirals and number of vertical threads, etc Mr. Kandawala points out in this connection that Indians collect quite a lot of sea shells and sell them to Japan for button-making, and that this can be prevented by the opening of this cottage industry in parts of the coast.

The other articles which the Ceylon House is engaged in popularising are: the Ceylon ebony which is preferred in some parts to the Indian one for making furniture and toys; cigarette and spectacle cases; lacquered walking sticks; ivory ware; and above all, cocoanut products like cocoanut shell charcoal, coir-mat, brooms and rushes, and desiccated cocoanut (i. e. cocoanut in thin and fine threads unlike the rough Indian hand-scraped ones).

Reviews

Experiments in Bee Culture by S. R. Narayana Iyer. Published by S. V. S. Vasan, Bee-Keeper, Coonoor, The Nilgiris. Price Rs. 1—8—0.

This is a most welcome publication. The book may be broadly divided into two parts. The first part, comprising the first nine chapters, deals with the practical up-keep of a hive and details of the units of the hive and the swarm. The second part, comprising the rest of the book, deals with the benefits of bee-culture in its economic, educational and hygienic aspects, and puts forth a strong, reasoned plea for the spread of bee-culture.

The treatment is exhaustive and excellent, the language simple and clear. It is a truth that a hobby broadens the mind and cultivates a spirit of good humour towards life. It is also true that natural scientists have a greater chance of picking up this spirit, possibly because of their frequent observation of the Cosmic Play in natural organisations. Mr. Narayana Iyer has a spirit of complacent good humour and an assured confidence in outlook and method To the reviewer, it was a pleasure to read through these 63 Royal pages of very close print.

The publication is of special significance at this particular time. The Wardha Scheme is in the air. We have approved the fundamental principles of this scheme and are looking out for crafts which will be suitable for our boys of a low age. Bee culture holds out vast potentialities because the allied things that it teaches are many. The only thing we could suggest to the author is that he would make the book smaller in size and the types larger in a subsequent edition. *S. Vaidyanathan.*

Sri Ramana Maharshi by V. K. Sankaran. Published by Sri Niranjanananda Swami, Sri Ramanasraman, Tiruvannamalai. Price As 6.

This is a small, well-written volume which treats of one of the high-lights of Indian thought and culture by one who claims to tread the path illumined by that light. The sea of worldly life is growing rougher and rougher every day, and this little book contains the nautical lessons given by a master mariner to those who set out on their frail barks.

The book is divided into 4 parts. The first gives a sketch of Sri Maharshi's life, the second, dialogues of Sri Maharshi with some devotees; the third gives in a nutshell Maharshi's teachings and the fourth is a description of Sri Ramanasramam.

The language is simple and clear. This little volume will prove a good text-book for school boys. S. V.

Devotees' Experiences by B. V. Narasimha Swami, 8, Second Line Beach, Madras. Published by the Author. Price 4 as.

This book is a continuation of the "Introduction to Sri Sai Baba", a review of which appeared in our January issue. It contains the experiences of some eminent devotees of Sri Baba. Baba's solicitude for his devotees and the loving care he took of them while he was alive and his equally potent influence even after his Mahasamadhi are borne ample testimony to in these records of experiences, and they go to show the real greatness of the saint. There are some pictures in the volume, and it is priced only 4 as. so as to be within the reach of all devotees.

Himalayan Readers, Primer and Books 1 to 5. Price As. 6, 7, 7, 8, 10 and 10 respectively.

This is a useful series for children to learn English. Beginning from the alphabet, the readers contain lessons well-graded and gradually building up a vocabulary and correct usage of English. They are profusely illustrated too.

The Dharma Tatva Number of The Kalyana Kalpataru (Vol. VI, No. 1.)

We offer our hearty congratulations to the Editors of the Kalyana Kalpataru for this substantial production. The first number of every volume of this valuable journal is usually a voluminous one devoted to some particular subject. This one under review keeps up the brilliant record of the journal, and in point of subject matter, it is even more serious and weighty than the previous volumes. No other word in Indian religion has been so little understood or more misunderstood than the word *Dharma*. There have been many substitutes for this word, but an equally comprehensive one is yet to be found. This number is an authoritative elucidation of the many aspects of this word from men well qualified for the task. The list of contributors is indeed imposing.

There are 19 pictures in the volume, most of them exquisite. The printing and get up are very good for such a bulky volume. It is priced Rs. 2—8—0 and more than justifies the price. We wish the journal many years of this splendid service to the religious world.

The New Book Digest. Published by The New Book Co., 188—90, Hornby Road, Bombay. Annual Subscription Rs. 2-8-0.

This publication has been doing useful service for some time now. It contains some articles of a literary type and a list of recent publications in English. It also contains critical estimates of many books and journals. It is, on the whole, full of information to the reading public and a trustworthy guide into the book world.

S. Vaidyanathan.

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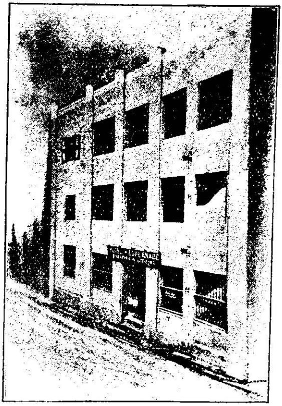

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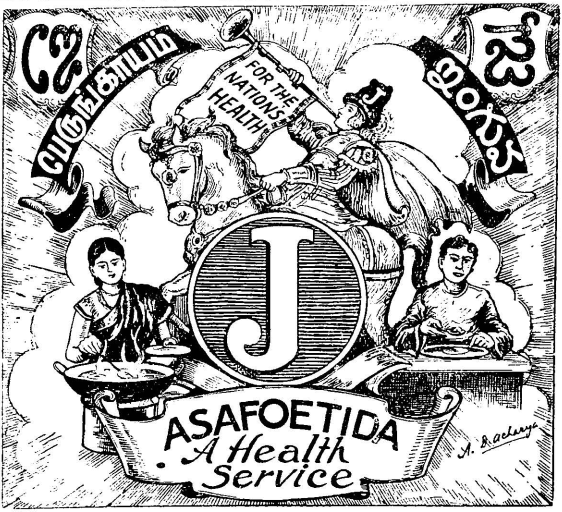

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